

Regional Inspector General for Investigations. The Office of Inspector General will investigate and prepare a report and recommendation to the Attorney General and to the Office of Acquisition Policy for suspension or debarment consideration.

Subpart 503.4—Contingent Fees

503.404 Solicitation provision and contract clause.

(a) The contracting officer shall insert the provision at 552.203-4, Contingent Fee Representation and Agreement, in solicitations for the acquisition of leasehold interests in real property which exceed the simplified lease acquisition threshold.

(b) The contracting officer shall insert the provision at 552.203-5, Covenant Against Contingent Fees, in solicitations and contracts for the acquisition of leasehold interests in real property.

[54 FR 26496, June 23, 1989, as amended at 57 FR 37889, Aug. 21, 1992; 60 FR 42794, Aug. 17, 1995]

503.408 Evaluation of the SF 119.

503.408-1 Responsibilities.

The contracting officer's documentation of the evaluation, conclusion and any proposed action must be reviewed by assigned legal counsel and the contracting director.

503.409 Misrepresentations or violations of the Covenant Against Contingent Fees.

Employees who suspect or have evidence of violations of the Covenant Against Contingent Fees clause shall report the matter to the contracting officer as well as the Office of Inspector General. If appropriate, the Office of Inspector General will forward a report and recommendation to the Department of Justice.

Subpart 503.5—Other Improper Business Practices

503.570 Advertising.

503.570-1 Policy.

Contractors shall not refer to contracts awarded by GSA in commercial

advertising in a manner which states or implies that the product or service provided is approved or endorsed by the Government or is considered by the Government to be superior to other products or services. This policy is intended to avoid the appearance of preference by the Government toward any product or service.

503.570-2 Contract clause.

The contracting officer shall insert the clause at 552.203-70, Restriction on Advertising, in solicitations and contracts for supplies or services when the contract amount is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold.

[54 FR 26496, June 23, 1989, as amended at 60 FR 42802, Aug. 17, 1995]

Subpart 503.6—Contracts With Government Employees or Organizations Owned or Controlled by Them

503.602 Exceptions.

(a) The heads of contracting activities may authorize exceptions to the policy in FAR 3.601.

(b) Offers submitted by Government employees on solicitations issued under the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-76 may be considered if the contracting officer complies with 503.603. When Government employees submit offers, they do so with the knowledge that if the contract is awarded, their Government employment will be terminated. The implementation of OMB Circular A-76 presents a unique situation which may be considered to be an exception to the policy in FAR 3.601. Contracts between the Government and its employees are not expressly prohibited except, where the employee acts for both the Government and the contractor in a particular transaction or where the service to be rendered is such as could be required of the contractor in his/her capacity as a Government employee.

503.603 Responsibilities of the contracting officer.

Before awarding a contract to a GSA employee who responded to an A-76 solicitation, the contracting officer shall:

(a) Obtain a written certification from the employee's supervisor that: the individual was not involved in the development of the solicitation or specifications, or in the preparation of the independent Government cost estimate or in-house cost comparison; had no advance knowledge of the details of the contents of the solicitation package; and was not otherwise involved in the contracting process.

(b) Refer the proposed award to assigned legal counsel for review and approval.

(c) Ascertain whether a reduction-in-force notice has been issued to the employee.

Subpart 503.7—Voiding and Rescinding Contracts

503.702 Definitions.

Notice means a letter sent by certified mail with a return receipt requested to the last known address of a party, its counsel, or agent for service of process. In the case of a business, such notice may be sent to any partner, principal officer, director, owner or co-owner, or joint venturer. If no return receipt is received within 10 calendar days of mailing, receipt will be presumed.

Voiding and rescinding official means the Associate Administrator for Acquisition Policy or a designee.

503.705 Procedures.

(a) Where a contract has been tainted by fraud, bribery, conflict of interest, or similar misconduct, the contracting officer should consult with counsel to determine if the Government has a common law remedy such as avoidance, rescission, or cancellation. Alternatively, the matter may be referred to the voiding and rescinding official under FAR 3.705, if there has been a final conviction for any violation of 18 U.S.C. 201-224.

(b) The contracting officer may postpone a decision to exercise the Government's common law right to void, rescind, or cancel a contract pending completion of legal proceedings against a contractor.

(c) A referral to the voiding and rescinding official should identify the final conviction and include the infor-

mation required by FAR 3.705(d) (2) through (5). The contracting officer should coordinate the referral with the Office of Inspector General to ascertain if a debarment referral is contemplated.

(d) The voiding and rescinding official shall review the referral and coordinate the matter with assigned legal counsel and the contracting activity. If a determination is made to declare void and rescind a contract and to recover the amounts expended and the property transferred, the voiding and rescinding official shall issue the notice required by FAR 3.705, and conduct the hearing contemplated by FAR 3.705(c)(3). If the voiding and rescinding official determines that there is a genuine dispute of material fact regarding the agency decision, the voiding and rescinding official shall refer the matter to the fact-finding official designated by the Chairman of the GSA Board of Contract Appeals. Such a referral will be made if there is a dispute of fact that relates to:

(1) The contracts affected by the final conviction giving rise to the proposed action.

(2) The amounts expended and property transferred by the Government under the contracts covered by the proposed action.

(3) The identity and value of any tangible benefits received by the Government under the affected contracts.

(e) If a referral for fact-finding is made, the fact-finding official shall:

(1) Afford the contractor the opportunity to dispute material facts relating to 503.704(d) (1) through (3).

(2) Conduct the proceedings under rules that are consistent with FAR 3.705(c)(3).

(3) Schedule a hearing within 20 calendar days of receipt of the referral. Extensions may be granted for good cause upon the request of the contractor or the agency.

(4) Deliver written findings of fact to the voiding and rescinding official (together with a transcription of the proceeding, if made) within 20 calendar days after the hearing record closes. The findings must resolve any material disputes of fact by a preponderance of the evidence.

(f) The voiding and rescinding official shall not issue the agency's final decision under FAR 3.705(e) until receipt of the fact-finding official's report, if any. The voiding and rescinding official may reject the findings of the fact-finding official only if they are determined to be clearly erroneous or arbitrary and capricious.

(g) In actions in which it is determined there are no material disputes of fact relating to the determinations required by FAR 3.705(d) (2), (4) and (5), the voiding and rescinding official will conduct the hearing contemplated by FAR 3.705(c)(3).

(h) The final decision must be coordinated with the contracting activity and a copy of the decision provided to the activity.

Subpart 503.8—Limitation on Payment of Funds To Influence Federal Transactions

SOURCE: 55 FR 29580, July 20, 1990, unless otherwise noted.

503.804 Policy.

Contracting officers shall submit a copy of each disclosure form received in accordance with FAR 3.803 or 3.804 to the Office of GSA Acquisition Policy (VP) immediately upon receipt. The Office of GSA for Acquisition Policy will prepare the agency report to Congress in accordance with FAR 3.804(b).

503.806 Processing suspected violations.

Contracting officers shall submit evidence of suspected violations of 31 U.S.C. 1352, Limitation on the Use of Appropriated Funds to Influence Certain Federal Contracting and Financial Transactions, to the Assistant Inspector General for Investigation or the Regional Inspector General for Investigation. The Office of Inspector General will investigate and, if appropriate, prepare a report and recommendation to the Department of Justice.

PART 504—ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

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504.7001-3 Order and call instrument identification number.

504.7001-4 Supplemental procurement instrument identification number.

504.7002 Procurement contract register.

AUTHORITY: 40 U.S.C. 486(c).

SOURCE: 54 FR 26498, June 23, 1989, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart 504.1—Contract Execution

504.101 Contracting officer's signature.

Contracts and contract modifications must be signed personally and manually by the contracting officer. The